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CHARCOAL FUMES

In a charcoal burner's hut,
walking through the woods
once I sought a shelter from the weather.
There I found an antick, playing on a pipe—
—and out of it there streeled a peacock's feather.
Aye, aye, aye,
tootling, " I spy",
like an adder's hood it spread
to weave a quilt about his bed—
a rainbow *and* a serpent skin together.

Offer him an acorn, offer him a pine,
offer him a snowball swum in heather wine,
offer him a hatband spun of eglantine!
But *nobody* must wear a peacock's feather.

Making bold to ask him where he got his pipe—
—while I was a-sheltering from the weather—
Had it from me ol' dad:
such a pretty knack he had
of fitting wood and wind together!
Aye, aye, aye,
just as sly as sly—
take a pinch o' fernseed and close your other eye.
Had it from a fairy, had it from a witch,
had it from an old man sitting in a ditch—
—and all said the same, Lad—all said the same,
You won't never walk straight
till you've walked lame.

So snap your ankle, break your song,
and trade your whistle for a gong,
to guide your bees to hive amid the heather!
Offer him some water, offer him some bread,
offer him a pretty fan to cool a fever'd head,
offer him a lily-flower to crumple in his bed!
But *nobody* must wear a peacock's feather.

26.viii.'40. PETER HOPEGOOD.

SIR MUNGO MacCALLUM

The Australian English Association has suffered a great loss in the death of its Life President, Sir Mungo William MacCallum, K.C.M.G., M.A., LL.D., D.Litt. Elected on the formation of this branch in 1923, until recently he actively occupied himself in its work. As one evidence of this, no fewer than six published lectures originally delivered to the Association remain.

The following tribute comes from the present Chairman of the Executive Committee, who is a former student of Sir Mungo MacCallum's. It takes the shape of personal recollections, but in the sentiments expressed all who know its subject will join, particularly the members of the Association which Sir Mungo MacCallum honoured for so long and in so many ways.

I am not minded, nor, indeed, am I competent to pass a considered judgment upon the life and achievement of so great and so good a man as the late Sir Mungo MacCallum. The bare outlines of his life and career are to be found in *Who's Who* and in *Who's Who in Australia*, for all to read, but only a metamorphosis shaped of memory and imagination could give them any real interest. The years to come may set his work for literature in true perspective, and this "consummation devoutly to be wish'd" cannot be reached while so much of his lifetime's work remains unpublished. Many Australians, who learned at University lectures and elsewhere to reverence the man for the breadth of his intellect and the depth of his scholarship no less than for the inspiration of his teaching and personality, will hope to see some day in book form the matter that delighted them when read from manuscript. They would like to have in better form than the meagre, often undecipherable, scribblings of their note books the outpourings of that splendidly logical and penetrating mind, whose generous sympathies fired in listeners something of the same love and enthusiasm for all that is good and valuable in art and letters.

None,
But such as are good men, can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Such inestimable good flowed from the life work of this man that it remains a task for a careful and appreciative biographer and editor to attempt an assessment. But I should like to call up some recollections of the living man that may be sufficiently typical to help fix his image in enduring memory and reflect something of the veneration which he inspired in so many.

As a boy at high school, I first remember hearing of Professor MacCallum from an English master who spoke of his opinions with a kind of awed reverence, and communicated to his class an advance respect for his judgment and authority in the field of letters. Then came a day when the great man himself spoke to the assembled school. I forget the exact occasion—I think it was Empire Day or Speech Day, and I am not disposed to take the trouble to find out, because the knowledge does not matter a scrap for my purpose. The essential thing that I want to remember is perfectly clear in my mind. Boyish imagination had already endowed the sage with a form and voice in keeping with his reputed greatness—a majestic presence and reverberant voice. Conceive the shock to my preconceived notions when there came upon the platform a little man, unobtrusive, and timid-looking. He came forward on the platform, and I remember my general impression was of "glasses glittering with affection" (I had only just finished Stevenson's *Memories and Portraits,* and the phrase crystallised itself immediately), and a face of delicate child-like features. I looked around upon the school: all were looking at the figure that had come to the front of the platform, and as I watched them watching him, a quotation that had been a favourite with my old public school headmaster came at once into my mind:

And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

Professor MacCallum began to speak, and a second preconceived notion was swept fantastically away as a thinnish, reedy voice came to give my ears as thorough a surprise as my

eyes had already received. Down the long corridor of the years, I forget all the details of that memorable address, but I can recall even now how the splendour of its ordered presentation and the inspiration of its message won the admiration of us all after the initial surprise. The speaker's face became animated with intelligence, the eyes held us with their reflection of a happy earnestness, and even the frail voice rounded to the fullness of grand periods and rang out with an impressive dignity. No finer test of inner worth and mental excellence could have been conceived than this appeal against physical unimpressiveness to a crowd of critical and irreverent schoolboys. An abiding memory remains with most, if not all, of those who listened that day. At the peak of the address, the speaker used Michael's words to Adam in the Eleventh Book of *Paradise Lost* to inculcate a lesson for living that most of his listeners have never forgotten:

> Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest
> Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven.

The words were delivered with a most appealing sincerity, and I have since realised how completely they summarise the code by which Professor MacCallum regulated his own full rich life, just as I now realise how abundantly Heaven granted him of her store.

After this unforgettable introduction I saw and heard a good deal more of this remarkably gifted man, and came to revere his character and marvel at his scholarship. Of course, his lecturing work at the University was mainly upon the subject of English, but I can remember occasions when he appeared before our French class and handled his subject (Fontenelle's *Dialogues des Morts,* I clearly recall) with the same ease born of knowledge. Still, English, and especially English literature (though his *Studies in Low German and High German Literature* are eloquent of his devotion to all literature and to language alike), was his special field, and he reaped in it his most abundant harvest. How splendid these lectures of MacCallum's were: how rich in knowledge, how ripe in wisdom, how acute in criticism! Whether he expounded the history and principles of criticism, or the periods and writers of English literature and specifically

the works of Shakespeare, he seemed always to reach the pinnacle of critical performance. The orderly marshalling of his facts, their welding into a homogeneous structure of criticism, the wealth, variety, and adequacy of his language, all contributed to his mastery in the architectonics of critical presentation. In all this work, MacCallum showed a striking gift of control of the language whose works he treated. Often he would strike out a memorable phrase: I remember the "fatuous bedazzlement" of, I think, Malvolio, the "no extant congener" of *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* and the "Leviathan of Laughter" of Falstaff. He had his little tricks of style, too, and in these he revealed something of a child-like delight. I remember the grave way in which he would endeavour to mystify us, with something akin to a Chestertonian flourish, by stating such a proposition as "Byron is not a Classicist, nor is he a Romanticist, or rather, he is both". With this little mystification he would either glance up from his notes with a twinkle of satisfaction in his eye, or come to the front of the platform and emphasise the conundrum with a grave wag of the head. His broad pronunciation of the diphthong in "both" (he pronounced it to rhyme with "north") greatly helped the effect. Occasionally even he made a slip and was guilty of an ambiguity that provoked laughter. Such a thing happened, for example, when, in lecturing on *Richard III* in 1919, he traced the development of Richard's strange wooing of Anne. Though "not made to court an amorous looking-glass", Richard's dauntless persistence led him to a blitzkrieg on her affections that was plainly and tellingly presented in its development until the lecturer reached a point where he used the unfortunate phrase: "he presses his suit." There was an instantaneous and unanimous titter from the men in the class, and broad smiles appeared on the countenances of the women. Momentarily disconcerted, the Professor lapsed into a rare outburst of petulance and denounced the class comprehensively as a pack of idiots (pronounced "idjits") and attributed the decline of academic intelligence to the presence of a "turbulent post-war element". The incident only served to emphasise his essential humanity. Perhaps he was right to feel incensed by the obtrusion of the incongruous

upon his serious presentation of a powerful dramatic theme—though I have no doubt he later recast the phrasing.

I have mentioned these little matters of oddity, not in way of detraction, but because they suggest the delicate shades in the splendid complete picture of the man and throw up by contrast the bright colours of his public character. But they are incidental merely: the mass of my memory is solid with the outpourings of a mighty brain. Of these, some subjects cling to the immediate surface of memory with greater tenacity and command easier recollection. In these the scholar made his deepest impress, even if it must not be assumed that they represent his best work or had the same supreme appeal for all, though I am sure they have added much to the general understanding and appreciation of English literature. The specially sensitive and gifted natures of Henry VI and Richard II, unfitted for kingship, but rich in spiritual worth; the streak of flintiness in successful Henry V, supremely equipped for kingship because of a spiritual fault; the stupendous mirth-making faculty of Falstaff; the blend of dignity and ridiculousness in Malvolio; the anticipation in Helena of the emancipated modern girl; the dead-end ennui of Jaques; the womanly glory of Imogen; the puzzling case of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark; the supreme terror of Lear's madness; the concentrated ferocity of Macbeth; the noble worth of Scott; the secret of Wordsworth's remedial art; the reconstruction of subconscious mental processes that went to make the wonderful unity of the *Ancient Mariner*; the "twin streams" that contributed to Byron's genius; the aborted dramatic promise of Keats; the spiritual awakening of Tennyson; the development of the dramatic monologue in the hands of Browning—these are the themes that most immediately and powerfully rise to my mind as I conjure up "spirits from the vasty deep" of memory. Others will remember different submissions; but all will admit the original force of a great thinker and scholar. In every subject he handled, Professor MacCallum had something new to offer, some fresh illumination to confer.

I should like to close this inadequate tribute with two recollections of lectures I heard from MacCallum, because,

taken together, they illustrate the completeness of his humanity. In the first, the lecturer treated of Thomas Day, the eccentric author of *Sandford and Merton,* and in the second he attempted an estimate of the merit of Charles Dickens. The story of Day's matrimonial ambitions and misadventures was given with such vivacity and humour that the lecture was interrupted regularly throughout its course by the laughter of the class; indeed, students and Professor joined wholeheartedly in a feast of unstinted merriment as the spoken words told delightfully of the aberrations of a grave unconscious comedian of our literature; I have never listened to a lecture so completely and consistently comic as this. But in the lecture upon the great novelist MacCallum plumbed the other depth of human feeling. He apologetically announced that the time at his disposal would not allow him to illustrate with any show of adequacy the writer's great gifts of humour and pathos, so that he would content himself with reading one passage illustrative of each quality. For the comic example he related Joe Gargery's solemn remonstrance when he accused Pip, who had under coercion parted with his daily crust to the convict on the moors, of bolting his food and breaking the code of their honourable competition of eating. Then, for the other illustration, he started to read the passage telling of the death of Dora. But long before he had reached the end of this pitiful narration, he stopped abruptly, and muttering some half-smothered apology, hastily gathered up his notes and vanished from the room, leaving a troubled class with a vague general impression of a little man weeping with the unaffected abandon of a child. This last is the picture of this great man that I like best to recall to mind: it establishes the certainty of his greatness, in that he knew those extremes of laughter and tears between which man is free to run the entire gamut of human feelings.

A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity.

H. L. McLoskey.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Australian English Association, held on 21st October, the following resolution, proposed from the chair, was carried:

1. That this Executive Committee of the Australian English Association records with deepest sorrow its sense of loss sustained in the death of its life President, Sir Mungo MacCallum, pays respectful tribute to the outstanding quality of his scholarship and his contribution to the advancement of the study of English literature, and honours the gifts of mind and heart which he brought to the enrichment of the lives of those who were privileged to make contact with him personally or through his published works and public lectures. In particular this committee acknowledges with gratitude and affection his labours in the cause of this Association, especially in the early years of its establishment.
2. That a copy of this resolution be sent to Lady MacCallum, together with an expression of sincere sympathy with her in her bereavement.

"SING, SUMMER"

Sing, summer, turn the gold to green
and etch in the sockets of the head
the light clean shadows of the dead.

Sing, summer, of the clown who ran
into the acres of the sun
to gather sheaves of ripened grain
and gathered silver spears of rain.
Sing, summer, sing. . . .

Speak, summer, of the freedom won
by every thrust of prisoned grass,
of shadows frozen in a glass,
fighting a jackal and a lion.

Speak, summer, from your heart and sing
for laughter that the misted spring
has formed the impulse of your heat
to swell and colour the green fruit.
O, summer, sing!

Olive Hopegood.

A NOTE ON VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *NIGHT & DAY*

By LEONARD WOOLF

THERE was an extremely interesting and ingenious article by Mr. Howarth on *Night & Day* in the April issue of *Southerly,* but as the actual facts are inconsistent with the conclusions, I feel that it is advisable to put them on record. Mr. Howarth argues from internal evidence that *Night & Day* was written before *The Voyage Out*. This is not the case. *The Voyage Out* was published in 1915. It was the first novel which Virginia Woolf wrote, and it was practically completed in its final form in 1913. She had been at work on it for many years and had rewritten it several times. At the end of 1913 she became seriously ill and had a mental breakdown. During 1914 she became slowly better, and at the end of the year seemed to have recovered, though she did little or no writing. Early in 1915 she had a relapse and she was critically ill for months. Then again she slowly recovered. By 1916 she was able to work, but the illness from which she suffered all her life was acute neurasthenia, and any prolonged strain or fatigue was dangerous. Consequently when she again began to write in 1916, she was allowed to write only about an hour a day, but by the end of 1916 she was able to do more than that and often, I think, wrote for two or three hours a day.

After her recovery in 1916 she began to write *Night & Day,* and was at work on it throughout 1917 and 1918. It was finished in March, 1919. The following extract from her diary (March 27, 1919) is conclusive evidence and shows her own feeling about the two books before the publication of *Night & Day*:

> Shall I own that I attribute some of this . . . to Night & Day which L has spent the past 2 mornings & evenings in reading? I own that his verdict finally pronounced this morning gives me immense pleasure: how far one should discount it, I dont know. In my own opinion N. & D. is a much more mature & satisfactory book than The Voyage Out; as it has reason to be. I suppose I lay myself open to the charge of niggling with emotions that dont really matter. I certainly dont anticipate even two editions. And yet I cant help thinking that, English fiction being what it is, I compare for originality & sincerity rather well with most of the moderns. L. finds the philosophy very melancholy. It too much agrees with what he

was saying yesterday. Yet, if one is to deal with people on a large scale & say what one thinks, how can one avoid melancholy? I dont admit to being hopeless though: only the spectacle is a profoundly strange one; & as the current answers dont do, one has to grope for a new one; & the process of discarding the old, when one is by no means certain what to put in their place, is a sad one. Still, if you think of it, what answers do Arnold Bennett or Thackeray, for instance, suggest? Happy ones—satisfactory solutions—answers one would accept, if one had the least respect for one's soul? Now I have done my last odious piece of typewriting, & when I have scribbled this page, I shall write & suggest Monday as the day for coming up to lunch with Gerald [Duckworth, her publisher]. I dont suppose I've ever enjoyed any writing so much as I did the last half of N. & D. Indeed, no part of it taxed me as the Voyage Out did; if one's own ease & interest promise anything good, I should have hopes that some people, at least, will find it a pleasure. I wonder if I shall ever be able to read it again? Is the time coming when I can endure to read my own writing in print without blushing shivering & wishing to take cover?

I should add perhaps two things. Her estimate of the relative merits of her first two books changed somewhat in later years. She came to think that *The Voyage Out* had the defects of clumsiness and immaturity, but also the merits of freshness and vitality, characteristic of first novels, and that *Night & Day* had some of the stiffness often seen in second novels, and she certainly held that on the whole the first was a better novel than the second. In a sense it is true to say that *Night & Day* was "a deliberate exercise in classicism". In writing *The Voyage Out* she had become vaguely conscious of dissatisfaction with the traditional form of the novel and of a desire to break away from it along the lines with which she subsequently experimented in *Jacob's Room*. But she did not feel that she was sufficiently experienced—sufficiently master of her craft—to begin the experiment at once. She therefore determined to write a novel strictly in the traditional form as a necessary stage in her own development as a novelist—as part of the process of acquiring mastery over the craft.

SOLDIER BEFORE A CITY

See how the mists rise quickly from our fingers,
And our bright boots tickle the vivid morning.
Now, behind us and before us lie many strange countries—
Pregnant with novel cultures, awaiting conquest. Women
Bake their white loaves in blackened ovens. Men
Who have been in circulation a long time, who have
Sex, wine and picnics as palliatives, prepare,
Type, file, despatch and publish many cheques,
Ledgers, dossiers, brochures, papers in a suite
Of little rooms. The fragrant young
Plan route-marches along the corridors of their days.
Shy virgins are painting their lips, playing the violin,
Dreaming of their own fecund survival. Unwitting
All prepare for our arrival.

When our sharp spurs shall stir
Synthetic strength and agonised desire
In our horses, when their iron hooves
Shall smack the pavings of alien streets,
Some will fling open high windows and wave and smile,
For they were restless in the old times and had desired change.
Others, who are forced to make a pause
At the lunch hour of their lives, they will weep
Silently into linen handkerchiefs, murmuring:
"Why did this have to be? By what plan? Under whose craven direction
Was such a vast assault permitted? At whose bidding? Why
Has this great misery come upon us? Why
When we have sown our seed and tenderly nourished our gardens
Should wild young cattle break through the gap in the hedge, trampling up
The soft and liquid tissue of our earth?
Surely there is some great madness in this?
For the texts and the moralities that we can
Dimly remember—the Golden Sayings stamped in Gothic type
Along the margins of our copy books—
These tenets learnt by rote, duly applied (or
Applied as often as was practical and convenient),
Which we had considered to be the Thus and the So
Of night and day, of breathing, of the exchange of goods and thought—
All are denied. The splintering cacophony
Of horses' hooves on Constitution Mall (horses
Ridden by youths thoughtless as children, wild and lustful as young duncoloured bulls,

Covetous as Jews, heedless as Saul, glib as the Pharisees),
These shrill diapasons spell the end for us—
A dreadful Passacaglia of finality.
We tremble for the honour of our daughters, and for the lives of our sons. Always
When our Great Fathers were laid to rest, or when
Some Prince of ours had died or a frail Infanta,
And they were borne along muted boulevards,
Stern were the *marches funèbres* about their graves.
What man was there abroad who did not feel
A moment of chill fear glazing his heart?
Did not tremble at the downward chromatics, the dying
Adagios? And this shoutinghoofbeatsmarching
Fires an anguish like that music for us—
Harsher, but more of terror for us. . . ."

Then those who are crazed and crippled with their years,
Who no more adhere or cope, or are personally involved or interested,
They have fermented their seed, yielded it to the skies,
And they will not be troubled by an unexpected modulation,
Or choose to greatly wonder whether their petals shall be preserved
In the National Herbarium, or whether
Their seed shall have taken root in another territory.

You may think me an imaginative young man.
But I assure you this is so, for when I have laughed and lunged
Into other cities, it has been the same. The reactions
Have lacked variety. I assure you this is so.

You can see it doesn't pay to wonder or to drift too free
On the stream of an idea. It is not to be considered
That we the Victors should mope and meditate and feel
By strange ways conquered. But somewhere,
Somewhere perhaps after you are given
The freedom of a city, or after you have felt
The brimming exaltation of a winning battle,
Somewhere and beyond all this I say—there is an ache
In the tired eyes of the women, their mechanical warmth, or in
The hopeless wilting of our combatants.

When I lie in bed, either at home
Or in barracks, I feel a thought like a tempered blade
Pierce the lapping darkness, shave through
The sullen textures of my mind—and I wonder,
Struggling for the right word: 'There is
Always a defeat, always. But is there
Ever a victory?'

But it is no good,
Indeed it is worthless, brooding on these things.
Merely let us keep our eyes appropriately upwards—
That looks brave—or gaze
At the pale air embossed with comrades' songs, or at
Each other's lips, sharp with the glint of liquor, or observe
The thin mists rising quickly between our fingers.

MUIR HOLBURN.

TERRA AUSTRALIS

Voyage within you, on the fabled ocean,
And you will find that Southern Continent,
De Quiros' vision—his hidalgo heart
And mythical Australia, where reside
All things in their imagined counterpart.

It is your land of similes; the wattle
Scatters its pollen on the doubting heart;
The flowers are wide-awake; the air gives ease;
There you come home; the magpies call you Jack
And whistle like larrikins at you from the trees.

And there, too, the angophora preaches on the hillsides
With the gestures of Moses; and the white cockatoo,
Perched on his limbs, screams with demoniac pain;
And who shall say on what errand the insolent emu
Walks between morning and night on the edge of the plain?

And northward, in valleys of the fiery Goat
Where the sun like a centaur vertically shoots
His raging arrows with unerring aim,
Stand the ecstatic solitary pyres
Of unknown lovers, featureless with flame.

JAMES MCAULEY.

ORDER FOR THE DAY

A Brief Play

By H. Drake-Brockman

Characters:

Mrs. Brett - - - - - - - - - - - *A widow*
Helen Brett - - - - - - - - *Her daughter*
Margaret - - - - - - - - *Her son's fiancée*

Scene: *The living-room of a small bungalow.*

Time: *The present—that is, 1942.*

The front door opens direct to a porch, left back (left and right that of audience). Large window with seat-sill balances door, centre back and left back. Open hearth with mantel, right; door into house, left. Radio cabinet faces mantel, left.

This is the main room of a "white-collar worker's" home in any Australian suburb—furnished with reasonable taste well-restricted by limited means. Flowers; lighter type of fiction and women's newspapers. A large photograph of a soldier, in a handsome silver frame, takes pride of place on the mantel-piece.

Mrs. Brett *sits knitting, right. A slight woman with auburn hair. Once she has been pretty; now she looks sagged and unreplenished. Her voice, when not determined-to-keep-bright, tends to be plaintive. She is waiting for the news, radio tuned down to soft music.*

Helen Brett *enters from the left. At twenty-four she retains the expression of a sullen child. Dark, she lacks her mother's vague air of conscious personality.*

Mrs. Brett: It's nearly time for the news.

Helen: I didn't come in for the news. I'm going to town.

Mrs. Brett: Not without your hat? You know, dear, I wouldn't like you to do that—so untidy. Turn up the radio for me, there's a darling.

Helen: No. I won't. You listen all day. It does you no good.

Mrs. Brett (*in a tragic voice*): If Dick should happen to speak and I missed his dear voice, I'd never forgive myself.

Helen: He'd forgive you, though. Easily. If I know Dick, he's not likely to get himself mixed up with any broadcasts.

Mrs. Brett: Oh, Helen! When he knows what it would mean for me to hear him—even once!

Helen (*shrugging*): Well, it'll be your own fault—you brought him up too shy and retiring. Sissy.

Mrs. Brett: Helen! He's the dearest son. Thoughtful and kind (*almost in tears*). Now he is so far away. In that terrible desert.

Helen: For all you know, he might be in Cairo, enjoying himself.

Mrs. Brett: You say such dreadful things. (*She knits with a sort of obvious desperation.*) Dick never said terrible things to me. I

can't understand—(*She drops her knitting into her lap with a pathetic gesture.*) Now, see—you've made me get this into a muddle—so thoughtless—

HELEN (*who has been restlessly moving round the room since she came in, stops*): Mother, I want to get a job.

MRS. BRETT (*automatically*): I couldn't do without you, dear. You know that.

HELEN (*determined*): We haven't enough money.

MRS. BRETT (*still automatically*): We can manage, till Dick comes home. In the past, when you two were little, I managed.

HELEN: Well, *I* can't. Who cares a damn for the past? Or the future, either, for that matter. All the girls have money for clothes and going out. Now.

MRS. BRETT: You mustn't be selfish—in time of war—

HELEN (*passionately*): War! War!

MRS. BRETT: Think of Dick.

HELEN: I do. All the time. Dick's got away. Dick's living—

MRS. BRETT (*low and tense*): He might even now be dead.

HELEN (*disregarding*): When he comes back, he'll get married. If Margaret's gone—then to some other girl you'll pick. He'll fall like the mug you've made him. Nothing will be any better. Everything will drag on in the same old way.

MRS. BRETT: Margaret's a sweet girl. Whatever do you mean by saying "if she's gone"? She *adores* Dick. She's been thoughtful to me all her life—so sweet. When this dreadful war is over we'll all be happy here together. I dream of that—so wonderful (*plaintively*). Helen, it's no good, I simply can't get this straightened out. You'll have to help me. (*She holds out the knitting.*)

HELEN: Why? You made the muddle.

MRS. BRETT: Helen *dear!*

HELEN: Oh, give it here, then. I suppose I'll do it.

MRS. BRETT: Turn up the radio, too.

HELEN: No. No, not that. I can't bear forever listening, listening. And doing nothing, being nothing. When you listen to the soldiers giving messages, they laugh and joke. They're alive. They're talking to their wives and their girls.

MRS. BRETT (*softly*): And their mothers. So beautiful; Dick would speak to me.

HELEN (*savagely, busy with the knitting*): Yeah. If Dick spoke it would be to you. Even if he wanted to speak to Margaret.

MRS. BRETT: Helen, dear, how can you say these things? What has come over you? When I was a girl I wouldn't have dreamed of saying such things—so harsh. You don't seem to have *any* sympathy. Margaret has. She knows what Dick means to me. And all she ever thinks about is pleasing Dick.

HELEN: Here's your knitting—I wouldn't be sure of that, if I were you.

MRS. BRETT: Sure of what?

HELEN: Margaret's got a job. She has money and new clothes. And lots of friends. She goes dancing.

MRS. BRETT: Margaret is charming. So gay (*sighing*). Like I used to be—once. Dick would be the first to understand *that*.

HELEN (*meaningly*): Probably he would.

MRS. BRETT (*pathetically*): At least Margaret never forgets to come and see me—and do anything I want.

HELEN: Well, she's been absent without leave for three days, this time. Record.

MRS. BRETT: You know she was getting a cold—so tiresome. I told her she must take care of it.

HELEN (*with a slightly hysterical laugh*): You should just see Margaret's cold—now she's got it!

MRS. BRETT (*with conscious dignity and a deep sigh*): Better put on your hat, darling, and go out for a little—and please turn up the radio as you go.

HELEN (*on a high note*): I won't! I won't!

MRS. BRETT *rises, resigned to turn up the radio herself.* HELEN *jumps in front of it. There is a momentary pause. Then* HELEN *bends swiftly and turns off the sound.* MRS. BRETT *moves forward, but* HELEN *fends her off and speaks in a hard, high brittle voice.*

HELEN: I'll give you news, if that's all you want.

MRS. BRETT (*arrested, facing Helen*): Daughter, you're breaking my heart.

HELEN: Oh, no. No, it's news I'm breaking. Are you ready? (*In the impersonal voice of a radio announcer*). This is a special announcement. All listeners will be interested to hear that Miss Margaret Maxwell, well known in Brett circles, for her great personal charm and her so-thoughtful manners, is to be married at St. John's Church. This afternoon, at four-thirty.

MRS. BRETT (*cutting in*): Helen, Dick would hate to hear you joking like this—so upsetting—

HELEN (*in her ordinary voice*): Poor old Dick—he isn't listening to this bulletin. He'll get his own upset later. (*She turns aside, and speaks carelessly.*) Oh, well—I expect Margaret will inform you—and him—all in her own way. *So sweet!*

MRS. BRETT (*suddenly really alarmed*): Do you mean you are not just—making this up?

HELEN: You always tell me I say what I mean. And I meant just what I said: Margaret is to be married. Today. And not—obviously—to Dick.

MRS. BRETT: I don't believe you.

HELEN (*shrugging*): Doesn't worry me—but I do know that Margaret's precious cold came from another State. It stands six feet tall, has broad shoulders and a gorgeous voice. Also, the careful treatment she gave it, on your advice, included a course of dinner and

dancing administered every night from six-thirty on. Peggy James told.

MRS. BRETT: That girl! So jealous! I don't believe her. I won't believe her. Margaret wouldn't do such a thing.

HELEN (*turning aside*): Girls mustn't be selfish, mother—in time of war.

MRS. BRETT: *You're* jealous. Because I love Margaret—

HELEN: Not now. I used to be. (*She crosses to window and sits, swinging a leg.*)

MRS. BRETT (*piteously*): Helen, you're fooling me?

HELEN (*remorseless*): Not at all. This afternoon. At four-thirty. She's wearing a veil and all. He wants her to.

MRS. BRETT: Dick—out there in the desert—

HELEN (*swinging her leg*): In time of war, mother . . . all's fair . . .

MRS. BRETT (*half to herself, dramatising*): I've kept going so long. Dreaming of Dick and Margaret settled close-by in their little home—me able to run in and out to my dear children—so wonderful—

HELEN (*from window*): Perhaps Margaret didn't think a little home close-by would be so wonderful. Perhaps she had her own dreams—

MRS. BRETT (*with determination*): I refuse to believe it. There's some mistake. Margaret wouldn't do such a thing without telling me.

HELEN (*who has been peering out and getting excited*): Well, it looks to me as if that is just about to happen. She's coming down the street now. Not alone, either.

MRS. BRETT: Let me see.

HELEN (*pulling down the blind*): You can't. Go and sit down.

MRS. BRETT (*retreating*): I must be sure you're not still fooling me.

HELEN: You'll be sure soon enough. He'll come in—No. He's not going to give us the pleasure. Margaret won't let him (*laughs*). Oh, Margaret, you're *so* noble you've got to face this out alone—I can hear you! But he says he'll stand by. Over there—under the peppermint tree. "And don't take too long, darling, please—"

MRS. BRETT (*uncertainly*): Helen—

A knock at the door convinces her. She sits uneasily. Helen snaps up the blind and runs to open door almost on the knock.

HELEN: Hullo, Margaret. Come in.

MRS. BRETT: Margaret, my *dear*—

Margaret, Helen's age, is fair and warm, with a sort of glow about her. At present, obviously in an emotional state, she nevertheless has sufficient self-control to maintain poise.

MARGARET: Hullo, Mrs. Brett.

HELEN: Mother was just complaining that you'd forgotten all about her.

MARGARET: How could I? (*Warmly, to Mrs. Brett*): You've been too much part of my life.

HELEN: Much too much, apparently.

MARGARET: Helen, what's wrong?

HELEN: You should know.

MRS. BRETT (*holding out her hand*): Come here, Margaret dear. Comfort me. Helen has been strange lately—so cruel. It often seems to me that you're more my daughter.

MARGARET (*not moving*): Mrs. Brett, I'm afraid Helen is strange because she has guessed. This isn't easy for me to say—what I have to say. Mrs. Brett, I can't marry Dick. I've come to tell you I can't.

MRS. BRETT (*rising*): Not marry Dick?

HELEN: That's it.

MRS. BRETT: Why, you've been going to marry Dick since you were children together.

MARGARET: I know. That's been the trouble—

HELEN *perches on the sill, leg swinging. She smiles sardonically.*

MRS. BRETT: You've loved Dick since you were a little girl—

MARGARET (*desperately*): I still love him.

MRS. BRETT: When he was a lad, I used to tell him how sweet you were—so thoughtful and kind.

MARGARET: Please don't remind me. You mustn't think this is—not hurting me. I do love Dick. I always have. I always will. But surely you understand the difference? Dear Mrs. Brett—please! You fell in love—you married. I've never fallen in love with Dick—we just grew up together. Perhaps he never fell in love either—

MRS. BRETT: This will kill him.

HELEN (*from window, casually*): If an enemy bomb doesn't get in first.

MARGARET: You can be cruel, Helen! Mrs. Brett—please understand. Please—please. This won't kill Dick—it would be more wrong for me to marry him, now.

MRS. BRETT: What do you mean—now?

MARGARET: Now I know the difference. Mrs. Brett, I'm being married to—to someone else—today—

HELEN (*glancing out the window*): That's what I told her. She wouldn't believe *me.*

MRS. BRETT (*cold and still*): What is this—person's name?

MARGARET (*giving it beauty*): Ian Carmichael.

MRS. BRETT (*tragically*): You can't. You can't do this wicked thing! It would break Dick, I tell you. He'll lose faith, out there in the terrible desert, up against death. Thinking of you, of me. Of the two of us together, waiting for him here, loving him, helping each other—

MARGARET (*low*): I have thought of it.

MRS. BRETT: Ever since you were children, I've said to Dick: "See how good and sweet and kind Margaret is—" I used to make little presents for him to give you. So pretty—things you liked. Have you forgotten?

MARGARET: I remember.

HELEN (*from window*): So do I. Hers were always the prettiest—

MRS. BRETT: How long have you known this—man?

MARGARET (*whispering*): Always—

MRS. BRETT (*sharply*): What? What do you mean—"always?" Were you lying to Dick?

MARGARET: No—no—Oh, I'm sorry, of course what I said sounds absurd—to you. I met Ian six weeks ago, Mrs. Brett.

MRS. BRETT: Then why didn't you tell me at once—bring him here to see me?

MARGARET (*low*): I couldn't.

HELEN (*cutting in*): Well, then, you should have been unselfish enough to fetch him for my sake—after all, *you* had Dick on ice.

MARGARET (*desperately, to Mrs. Brett, ignoring Helen*): Mrs. Brett—please—Can't you remember what it is like? What you felt about—Dick's father?

MRS BRETT *turns deliberately away. There is a dreadful pause.*

HELEN (*with a brittle laugh*): Misfire, Margaret. You ought to realise by now that she never mentions *him.* So awkward!

MRS. BRETT (*turning back and speaking with passion*): My dear child, you're infatuated. When I was a girl an engagement meant something more than a ring. Think, Margaret, think—if Dick is killed, how will you feel? Supposing at this very moment he lay dying, calling for us—

HELEN (*from window*): Ian's getting impatient, Margaret. You should see how he's fidgeting. He's terribly good-looking, isn't he?

MRS. BRETT: Or wounded—or taken prisoner. Think, Margaret, think—can't you imagine Dick fighting alone, dreaming of you and then all the time you—

MARGARET: Don't. I won't change. I can't.

MRS. BRETT (*softly*): Dear Margaret, it's just that you've been a little carried away—

MARGARET (*steadily*): No. No. Not that. Mrs. Brett, if you don't know what it's like to feel, the first moment you meet someone, that you belong to each other—I can't tell you. It happens. That's all. And then it's the right thing, and anything else in the world would be wrong.

MRS. BRETT (*turning to photo*): Look at Dick there, watching you. Of course you've just been a little thrown off your balance. I *can* understand, my dear—so lonely. If there'd been no horrible war, why, you'd never even have met this man. You'd be already married to Dick. We'd all be together—so happy.

MARGARET (*very strained*): What is the use of saying If? Of course I'd not have met Ian if the war hadn't happened. But it has happened. It's a fact. I *have* met Ian.

MRS. BRETT (*crossing to mantel*): Look at him, Margaret. Do you remember when this was taken? You came here that night to tea—Dick on his last leave. Do you remember the roses he brought us—so extravagant—and how they scented this room? And the silver frames, yours and mine, exactly alike? And how Dick joked over the way you and I adored him—

MARGARET: Please—

MRS. BRETT (*tragic again*): Now you're jilting him for some cheap pick-up.

MARGARET (*turning away at last*): I can't make you understand.

MRS. BRETT (*suddenly hard*): It's Dick you'll have to make understand. Tossing him over for fun and dances while he has to fight in the desert.

MARGARET (*passionately*): You're wrong. You're dreadfully wrong. You've got no right—Oh, God, Mrs. Brett, in a week Ian will be gone to Port Moresby. And I love him!

MRS. BRETT (*relentlessly*): You said you loved Dick.

MARGARET (*in agony to* HELEN): Helen, you're young—surely you—

HELEN: Don't ask me! I haven't your experience in degrees of love. Ian's getting frightfully restless.

MARGARET (*controlling herself, quietly to* MRS. BRETT): It's agony to end like this. I'd hoped you'd understand . . . I wrote to Dick, last night.

MRS. BRETT: And tonight you marry this other! See you think of Dick tonight, Margaret. That's all I ask now. He'll call you a deserter.

MARGARET: I'm going.

HELEN: Ian must have come over to the gate—no. No. It's not Ian. It's somebody else. It's the postboy.

There is a dead silence. The door bell rings. HELEN *jumps down and runs to the door. She opens it a tiny way and says* "Oh, thanks" *to a mumble outside.*

HELEN (*shutting door*): It's a telegram.

MRS. BRETT: Who's it for?

HELEN (*trying to be casual*): Me—I expect. About a job.

MRS. BRETT: Open it then.

HELEN: No. No, not now.

MRS. BRETT: Helen, you're shaking. Let me see that telegram—

HELEN: Better to let me open it, mother—

MRS. BRETT: It's from the Army! I know it is—give it me—

MARGARET: The Army!

HELEN (*gently*): Mother, I'd rather you let me—

MRS. BRETT *snatches the telegram from* HELEN *and tears it open. The girls watch her, horribly fascinated. She reads, shuts her eyes, puts her hand over them.*

HELEN (*breaking the silence, anxious and gentle*): Please mother—

MRS. BRETT (*moaning*): How can I endure it? Alone—alone—

HELEN: Mother—

MRS. BRETT (*opening her eyes and staring straight at* MARGARET): Are you still there, Margaret? Then listen. Are you listening? I have to inform you that last week Sergeant Richard Brett (*she pauses*) died of wounds.

HELEN (*sharply*): Dick! (MARGARET *does not move or speak.*)

MRS. BRETT (*her voice rising*): What are you waiting for, Margaret? That's all. There's no need for you to stay here—Hurry. Hurry out to your new lover. He's waiting for you. So eager—

HELEN: Not Dick—surely not Dick—

MRS. BRETT: Go on. Go on. Hurry, Margaret. You can't hurt Dick any more—he's past any wounds you can inflict. What do mine matter to you? Hurry off to your wedding. You don't have to worry over Dick any more—tonight you can be happy—so happy—Dick won't ever know. You can sleep in peace—

MARGARET (*rushing blindly to the door*): Oh, God!

MRS. BRETT (*staring at the door as it bangs shut behind* MARGARET): Tonight, every time that man kisses her, she'll think of Dick—cold and dead as the other is hot with life—

HELEN (*breaking down*): Don't. Don't. You make it more horrible—Dick wouldn't want that. Oh, mother—poor Dick—

MRS. BRETT (*wearily sinking into her chair and letting the telegram fall*): My son. My dear, dear son—How shall I live? How could you forget? That day—when I brought Margaret home. Her warm ways, so gentle—all lost—all gone—alone—alone—

HELEN, *sobbing, picks up the telegram. As she reads it a startling change comes over her face.*

HELEN (*horrified*): Mother!

MRS. BRETT (*alert*): Put down that telegram, Helen. It's mine. Put it down, I say.

HELEN: I've read it.

MRS. BRETT (*sharply*): What are you going to do?

HELEN *rushes to the door, calling out.* MRS. BRETT *rises.*

HELEN: Margaret!

MRS. BRETT *tries to reach* HELEN, *but she has the door open.*

HELEN: Margaret—come back. I want you. Margaret—quick, it's urgent.

MRS. BRETT *tries to take the telegram from* HELEN, *who resists.*

MRS. BRETT: Give it to me!

HELEN (*in a passion*): Let go! Let go! She's got to be told—*Margaret appears, startled.*

HELEN: Come in, quick. Here—take this. (*Helen thrusts the telegram at Margaret and holds back her mother.*) Read it. Read it. Be quick.

MARGARET (*reading aloud*): "Married in Cairo last week. Please inform Margaret my behalf. Regrets. Letters following. Dick." (*Mystified*): I don't understand—

HELEN: That's the same telegram—mother misread it.

HELEN *lets go her mother and walks to the window.* MRS. BRETT *seats herself in her chair and picks up her knitting, drops it, lifts a handkerchief to her eyes and sits silent.*

MARGARET (*her voice rising as she re-reads*): Married in Cairo last week—Dick?—inform Margaret—

HELEN (*to Margaret*): I'm ashamed, Margaret. But I couldn't very well let you be made to pay for mother's disappointment—

MARGARET: He's all right? This means Dick's all right?

HELEN (*with a return to her old manner*): He appears to think so!

MARGARET (*voice vibrant with joy and relief*): Ian—oh, Ian!

MARGARET *drops the telegram and runs out, oblivious of* HELEN *and* MRS. BRETT. *Her voice is heard outside, calling.*

MARGARET (*outside*): Ian—Ian darling—

HELEN (*drearily*): Sorry to spoil your little drama, mother.

MRS. BRETT says nothing. HELEN picks up the telegram. Reads it. *Laughs bitterly. Tosses it down.*

HELEN: You wanted us all for yourself, didn't you? All to revolve around you—Dick, and the wife you'd picked for him. Even me! All of us. Ever since I can remember you've acted lonely and helpless, just to keep us. Helpless—you! (*with sudden passion*). A moment ago you even dared to let me think Dick was dead. So you could get square with Margaret for walking out on *you—you!* Dick wasn't in the picture—d'you realise that? Did you think I'd stay dumb for ever? But Dick's my brother. D'you hear? Not only your son—my brother!

MRS. BRETT: Stop, Helen—stop—

HELEN: Dad cheated you out of love, you've tried to make up to yourself by cheating us out of our own lives.

MRS. BRETT: Cruel—so cruel—

HELEN (*dispassionately*): I suppose I'm sorry for you. In a way.

MRS. BRETT (*eagerly*): If it weren't for the war—

HELEN (*disgusted*): There you go again! What's the use? Margaret has told you—the war's a fact. Dick and the girl he's married and Margaret and that Ian Carmichael—they belong to the war. They're part of it. They've got to live *now.* (*She goes to the front door.*)

MRS. BRETT (*sharp with anxiety*): Helen, where are you going?

HELEN: To get a job, of course. I belong, too. For better or worse, work or play, life or death!

MRS. BRETT (*half rising*): Helen, you can't leave me—

HELEN: Sorry, I've no more life to waste, mother. You made your own muddle. For once you'll have to straighten it out yourself.

HELEN *goes out front door. The curtain falls.*

(ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.)

VALEDICTION

A verse is all I bring
To lay below her feet:
She does not need sweet flowers
Who was herself all sweet.

G.

TWO POETS

W. H. Davies and John Shaw Neilson

"Two poets in two distant climates born"—yet not dissimilar, and both recently dead. The following tributes may, therefore, fittingly be placed together.

In Memoriam
(W. H. Davies)

Will Spring, returning, find an old resort
In England of the undelivered flower
Slain in the germ by blasts no winter's power
Commissioned in its blusterous rage or sport;
Where half the clouds of murky smoke are wrought,
And, for the close-wedged swallows, hour by hour
The bombers in formation dip and tower,
And vernal shells are April's choirs untaught?
Yet Spring, some day, will make earth's beauty whole,
And put the rainbow back into the skies,
And though her laureat's voice will not be there,
Those whom it blessed, now comrades of the mole,
With fear, for vision, in their fluttering eyes,
Will walk the woods again, and stand and stare.

F. J. H. Letters.

Friend of the Crane
(For Shaw Neilson)

Love to him was feeling soft as light
that rides upon portending wings of dawn,
through quick green worlds beyond the trick of sight,
or runs with spring across the dew-grey lawn;
no scholar this, but wise in human love,
he has a universal song to sing—
of long white noons, and where the breezes rove
within a dream of youth at evening;
of earth's eternal pain, and seasons dim,
and summer miracles, the way creeks flow,
and kindly folk, and wide horizon's rim;
of breathing morn, and wealth the wild bees stow—
life is a song when seen through loving eyes:
a lover's song for lovers never dies.

C. B. Christesen.

YEATS AND ARNOLD: A COMMON RHYTHM

Among the many memorable rhythms which the Yeats of the middle and later periods struck out in his search for something that could combine speech-rhythms with those of poetry, few are more successful than that irregular form used in *The Fisherman*, *Easter 1916*, and many other poems; and it has seemed so much his own as to be almost a trade-mark. It is predominantly iambic, with usually three beats to the line, but its regular pattern is consciously broken up by the introduction of the stresses and falls of ordinary speech, which tend especially to throw together two or more stressed syllables, or to separate them by an informal running series of light syllables. The resemblance to ordinary speech is maintained also by deliberate flatnesses and by the use of personal and place names not always in themselves evocative.

> How could you dream they'd listen
> That have an ear alone
> For those new comrades they have found,
> Lord Edward and Wolfe Tone,
> Or meddle with our give and take
> That converse bone to bone?
>
> (*Sixteen Dead Men.*)

It is all there—the stressed syllables thrown together in "new comrades" and in "converse bone"; the lightness of "How could you dream" and "comrades they have found"; the personal names of the fourth line; the colloquialism and the extra beat of the fifth. A better known example is:

> I write it out in a verse—
> MacDonagh and MacBride
> And Connolly and Pearse
> Now and in time to be,
> Wherever green is worn,
> Are changed, changed utterly:
> A terrible beauty is born.
>
> (*Easter 1916.*)

I do not think that it has been pointed out—though it would hardly be surprising if it had—that Matthew Arnold anticipated Yeats in the use of this rhythm by more than half a century; in *Haworth Churchyard*, written in 1855:

> . . . and She—
> (How shall I sing her?)—whose soul
> Knew no fellow for might,
> Passion, vehemence, grief,
> Daring, since Byron died,
> That world-fam'd Son of Fire; She, who sank
> Baffled, unknown, self-consum'd;
> Whose too bold dying song
> Shook, like a clarion-blast, my soul.
>
> (ll. 158 ff.)

This portrait of Emily Bronte uses all Yeats' devices, save one: the pattern is a three-beat iambic (though disguised somewhat by inversions), broken by the irregularities of juxtaposed stresses in the

sixth and penultimate lines, by running unstressed syllables in the second and last lines, by the extra beats in the sixth and last lines; even the name is there. The occasional and deliberate sinking into the flatness of prose is not illustrated in this passage, but appears elsewhere:

> . . . in the house of one
> Friendly and gentle, now dead,
> Wordsworth's son-in-law, friend—
> Four years since, on a mark'd
> Evening, a meeting I saw.
>
> (ll. 3 ff.)

Nor is it wholly fanciful to see, in the Emily passage at least, something of that spirit of "passion, vehemence, grief" which Yeats infuses into the same metre—the sense of the preciousness of human personality, the realisation of the universal symbol behind the single man or woman, the understanding that "a terrible beauty is born" more often than is obvious.

The only real difference between the rhythms of the two poets (one puts aside as inevitable Arnold's more heavy and obvious "poetic diction") is that, where Arnold leaves his lines unrhymed, Yeats, with a surer instinct for form, unifies his irregularities by binding them, as one binds a rambler rose, to a framework of rhyme. Arnold's poem sprawls somewhat; Yeats' has the strong contours of a disciplined but organic growth.

Those who remember Professor Le Gay Brereton may be interested to learn that his comment on the Arnold passage, written in his copy of the poems, now in the Dixson Library at New England University College, was the single exclamation—"Prose!" He may, however, have been thinking of the expression rather than the rhythm, and the comment does not necessarily imply that he would have condemned Yeats in the same manner.

S. Musgrove.

CORRESPONDENCE

English English

To the Editors of *Southerly*.

Dear Sirs,

Eureka! I have found it—but not in Australia, in *The Van Pool and Other Poems*, by Keidrych Rhys, 1942, page 29:

> 'Soft buckets from the ivied coalhouse
> Out of a too-dear two hundredweights ration.'

In his own words (page 16):

> 'Oh how this next phenomena saddens me!'

I see it is high time I turned my baleful attention to the younger English poets. Already I have noticed, in one of them, "a strata". This kind of thing must not be allowed to go on.

Excelsior!

Pedant.

THE RING

PERIODICAL PROGRESS

Meanjin Papers, No. 10. Edited by C. B. Christesen. (Brisbane. 2s.) *Angry Penguins*, No. 3. Edited by Max Harris. (Adelaide.) *Arna*, the Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney, 1942. Edited by Tess Van Sommers.

THE tenth number of *Meanjin Papers* will probably do more to establish Mr. Christesen as an editor of catholic tastes than to further the reputation of any individual writer. This does not mean, however, that no first-class work has been included. Most memorable, I consider, is F. John Blight's "For a Friend in Malaya". Mr. Blight's theme is a commonplace of war poetry, but it has been handled with unusual skill. His language has that terse epigrammatic quality which is always a reliable index of genuine feeling:

> I would blame
> No man whom walking and sunset had beguiled
> Into benighted years of preterite thinking.

Also notable are Mr. Howarth's fresh and melodious "Lament" and James Picot's "Sonnet Upon an Edition of Vaughan", which is, incidentally, an interesting piece of literary criticism.

At least five of the Meanjin poets seem to have been obsessed with the idea of Spring. Whether their poems were written at the request of the editor I do not know, but my personal impression is that with certain exceptions they were. Mr. Christesen's own "Spring Insistent", for instance, has all the weaknesses of verse made to order. Its final couplet is particularly limp and irritating:

> O tantalising Heart of Spring,
> You remember damn near everything!

Similarly trite are Bronnie Taylor's "There Shall Spring be Desolate", despite its interwoven verses, and Gina Ballantyne's "Spring, 1942", in which I sense a certain retreat from the poet's former, ardently Jindyworobak position. Of greater power are K. H. Bradshaw's anguished "From the Fallen" and John Henderson's "Love is its Own Eternity". The latter poem ends oddly, and its surface is occasionally broken by outcropping poeticisms, but its lack of unity is leavened by a general richness of thought and diction. Max Harris has contributed a lesser poem, "The Walk". Dorothy Hewitt's "Planes" is an interesting study in the psychology of fear, but it is almost completely lacking in rhythmic urge. The remaining poems are slight and a little reactionary in mood and technique, but they are agreeable withal, particularly Rosemary Dobson's "The Idlers" and an unpretentious little lyric "Out of This Battle" by Kathleen Watson. The only jarring note is provided by an extract from Rex Ingamells' "News of the Sun", which merely serves to add additional weight to the argument that sincerity alone cannot transform verse into poetry.

The three critical articles, if not outstanding, are worthy of attention. Nettie Palmer thoughtfully celebrates Inglis Moore's *Six Australian Poets*, and a further letter is addressed to the ghost of Tom Collins, on this occasion by Kylie Tennant. Miss Tennant indicts Tom on the charge of intellectual snobbery, condemns the smugness of Australian literature in general, and in forceful language restates our need for 'higher criticism'. In "The Conditions of Poetry" Professor Chisholm attacks false nationalism, declaring that local colour should be transformed into 'local pigment for light that never was on land or sea because land and sea are only its material shadows'.

In the foreword to *Angry Penguins*, No. 3, a subtle lowering of temperature is detectable. At least the intimidating frontal attacks which the peruser of previous numbers was forced to withstand have been replaced by tactics that are quieter if ultimately no less devastating. 'Not licence but liberty', we are told, is the present aim of the magazine. '*Genuineness now*' is to be the sole standard. Although it is immediately apparent that the editorial policy is a conveniently flexible one, it must be admitted that the majority of the work published maintains a fairly high level of achievement and is indeed genuine now.

Max Harris's "Elegy of Sut" contains some isolated passages of splendidly vigorous and sensitive writing in which this poet continues to exercise his neat and delicate wit, as, for example, when he describes fogs and mists as 'transient as kisses of cousins'. His "Crucifixion of Christ" is spoiled, however, by a rather static and unoriginal conclusion. Of the other poems, Joseph O'Dwyer's "Famine" exhibits the smoothest technical finish, though the experimental verse of Geoffrey Dutton, D. B. Kerr, Alister Kershaw and C. M. Carter is substantial and workmanlike.

Of the short stories, Professor J. I. M. Stewart's "Keine Juden Erwünscht" is a penetrating piece of reportage. Several incidents of varying importance are skilfully related against a background of Vienna during the bitter and ominous winter of 1940-41. In "The Drug" H. M. Swan displays a thoroughly imaginative response to a grotesque and unwieldy theme.

The number concludes with a comment by Max Harris on the Austrian novelist Franz Kafka, and a sympathetic review by John Reed of Reg. S. Ellery's *Schizophrenia.*

The Melbourne critic 'Hermes' has remarked that *Angry Penguins* bids fair to becoming the successor to the much lamented *Art in Australia.* While this may seem premature, one must hasten to agree that a truly progressive spirit has been shown in the reproduction of paintings by such artists as Tucker, Roberts, Boyd and Dallwitz. If Mr. Harris can both retain his present clarity of vision and secure

adequate financial support, one may confidently predict as lively a future for his editorial ventures as for his poetry.

The current *Arna* contains a modicum of the windy prose and self-conscious verse that seems inevitable in an undergraduate production. The most interesting article is "Dionysus ad lib.", in which Harold Stewart attempts to establish some rules for the composition of poetry. Though brightly and emphatically phrased, these rules are neither new nor do they represent the *only* possible method of approach. Nevertheless they are of a kind that no practitioner might study without advantage. Mr. Stewart wisely insists that more attention should be paid to the pure craft of poetry, that a poem should present a fully realised experience, and that it should derive its unity from a consistent emotional tone. Unfortunately in his published poems, "The Annunciation" excepted, Mr. Stewart has not made a point of obeying either of the two latter injunctions. His verse offers a succession of vivid and dazzling images, but the total impression conveyed is one of artificiality and tinsel. Certainly Mr. Stewart's work is never flat or dull, but it lacks the emotional impulse which alone could make its elaborate imagery organic and significant.

On the other hand, there is in James McAuley's "Gnostic Prelude" and "Landscape of Lust" an unmistakable core of feeling. Mr. McAuley's devices may appear less immediately striking than Mr. Stewart's, but he can achieve a greater melodic subtlety and a total effect that is surely more resonant and dynamic.

In an entirely different vein is A. D. Hope's tart and amusing satire on Freud and his literary disciples, whilst the three laconic metrical statements of 'Phoenix' represent an achievement in aphoristic verse that does not lag far behind Mr. Hope's own. Other poems in a rather limited variety of moods and manners, but well worthy of mention, are supplied by R. T. Dunlop, A.G.C., 'Consul' and V.B.W.

In concluding this review, it is scarcely possible to refrain from commenting upon one notable feature that would seem to be characteristic of contributors to all three publications. One is impressed above all by an earnest, zestful and often successful experimenting not only with verse and stanza forms but with colour, sound, emotional pressure and intellectual values. There is, too, a happy dearth of exhibitionists and libertines. Much still remains to be done, but in such a time as this it is highly encouraging to see so many actively engaged in firing the undergrowth and working the arable fields.

MUIR HOLBURN.

CASEY'S QUARRY

It's Harder for Girls, by Gavin Casey. (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1942. 7s. 6d.)

This is the S. H. Prior Memorial Prize-winner for 1941-1942: a collection of stories of the goldfields by the author of "Short-Shift Saturday". Readers acquainted with that fine story (it is included in the present volume) will look here for the same insight and understanding, the same delicate and penetrating sympathy, and will not be disappointed. Bit by bit a complete picture emerges of the life on the fields—the dulling routine, the anxieties open and suppressed, the drudgery and privations and hectic alleviations. It is not all gloom. There are other yarns nearly as hilarious as "Rich Stew"—the story of the family compelled, at the policeman's knock, to find a quick hiding place for the telluride "souvenir'd" from the mine by their old man. Mother plumps it into the stew: "by the time every plate was clean, the old man estimated that the family would assay over ten ounces to the ton, with himself showing top value, worth £4 or more, and the baby ready to crush for a little over expenses." But the prevailing tone is sombre: "there were lines under her eyes and at the corners of her mouth that hadn't been there five years earlier when we'd been married"; this is the note. The life is hardest for women, but it is hard for everyone. Casey sees human lives wilting and withering in this harsh environment, watches division and estrangement creep into personal relationships. These things, rather than outright tragedy and disaster, are what interest him, though tragedy and disaster have their place; and he can convey the sheer physical menace that lurks in the mines—the "talking ground" at the deep levels, the whisperings and groanings and "stifled, faraway grunts that indicate the minute movements of hundreds of tons of earth".

Technically, the stories are far from flawless. For example, does Casey know quite what he is trying to achieve by his use of imaginary narrators? He is extremely fond of the method and occasionally uses it well. But as a rule it brings him very little gain, because he cannot (or does not) vary his writing sufficiently to give the effect of contrasted idioms or mark off clearly one mind from another. "A Game with the Kid", for instance, is supposed to be told by a middle-aged business man: we learn this towards the end of the story; but it would have been hard to guess, from the manner of it, that the narrator was not another miner. Yet the emotional experience of this man is precisely what constitutes the story. Even when Casey does appear to be moving towards an utterance that is individual and distinctive he seems to find trouble in maintaining his "key". There is a story (told by a youth) called "Dirty Paper". The young fellow attends night school: we hear that "all of us in the class stopped yapping", that the teacher (a "harmless old cow") had "a patch over one optic", and so on. The narrator says "yair" and gives signs of being mildly tough. Yet mixed in with these "yairs" and "optics" and

"yappings" we have pieces of semi-literary impressionism (the drawing "came out beautifully like him, rolls of fat, bald head, disreputable eyepatch and sagging, tired mouth"), phrases like "discouraged and resentful", words like "conciliatory". Casey can't have it both ways: either the key is that of lightly impudent toughness or it isn't; if it is, then the "literary" interpolations are absurd.

There is no doubt that Casey will find the right solutions for his technical problems. But I have a feeling that the short story may not, in the end, prove his true line. A long, leisurely, fully documented novel of the goldfields, based (perhaps) on the theme that appears to interest him most—disillusionment in married life—might show him working at full power. It is significant that "Short-Shift Saturday", the last and longest story in the volume, remains by far his best.

A. J. A. Waldock.

NO LUCK

Squatter's Luck and Other Poems, by Ethel Anderson. (Melbourne University Press, 1942. 5s.)

Those who have a first-hand knowledge of pioneering and a well-informed appreciation of Australian scenery, especially trees and wild flowers, may recognise much authentic description in this volume of verse. For a wider audience the slightness of the content and the shallowness of most of the sentiment will probably counteract any emotional effects which the occasional felicities of form and expression may produce.

Flood, fire and weeds are, as everyone knows, the enemies of the man on the land, though city-dwellers may be inclined to forget how continually his existence is threatened. In the series of short poems under the title "Squatter's Luck", the author describes, against the same background of Warrumbungles and Tambourine Mountains, a succession of these visitations, interspersed with moment of bucolic gaiety. She has a pleasing sense of form and achieves some excellent contrasts, and the reactions of her two typical young men of the land, Silas and Eustace, reveal to some extent the characteristics she claims for them in her Introduction: "an ardour for physical enjoyment, a capacity for accepting natural beauty as the highest type of beauty, a short memory, and an Epicurean delight in the present." But her main thesis, that "the Australian countryman brings back into a living world the glory that was Greece", remains unproven.

In the climax of the poem, from these same Warrumbungles and Tambourine Mountains, the countrymen respond to the call of War:

> Active, deep-chested, virile, intelligent,
> With massy thews worked to whip-cord by labour,
> The best men God and their parents could perpetrate,
> Eager to prove the true worth of their manhood,
> The men from the land flock down in their thousands.

'It's good-bye to the land!', when war came, calmly,
Si said to Eustace: 'Our disc-plough's a Bren gun,
Our harrow's a tank.' 'Fighting Huns will be child's play
After our battles with fire, drought and flood, Si!'
Enlisting, gaily, they too joined the army.

That the men who have clung to their land through flood and fire should leave it, 'gaily', to prove the worth of a manhood already proved day after day, and for no other reason, is as un-Greek as it is un-Australian. The same sort of false sentiment is to be found in the Introduction: "Once again Australians have gone, from their new world, to right the old world's wrongs."

However, the author must not be judged only on her psychology. Most of the other poems are written in a romantic pastoral vein, reminiscent sometimes of translations of Vergil's Georgics, sometimes of Wordsworth. It is difficult to write in such a vein without appearing to lapse occasionally into conventionality, and the level of expression is rarely maintained consistently enough to bear the weight of geography and natural history. Some of the short songs interspersed in the narrative are an exception, and perhaps the best piece in the volume is *The Command to Day*, not, as you might suspect, a sophisticated Elizabethan lyric, but the song of a child passing through an orchard:

Go, happy day,
  Tip these white, flowery trees
Into the mirk of night;
  Topple cherry and pear and plum
Into the antipodes;
  With root upright
There let them stay
  Till kingdom-come.
But this bright clay,
  In nomad haste, forget;
Forget this prickly arch
  Of beauty native to our soil,
With wick-leaved crowea and boronia set,
  And spiny fuchsias; this, your march
Through sooty time would grey,
  Remembrance, spoil.

G. R. Manton.

ADDRESSES TO THE ASSOCIATION

August–November, 1942

Papers by Students

September 28

"*Thomas Wolfe*"

Miss Kathleen Barnes

Thomas Wolfe's childhood was spent in beautiful surroundings but an uncongenial and disturbing home environment. The effects of these influences are seen in his work, in his appreciation of natural beauty, and in the sense of loneliness, of spiritual nostalgia, which brings him back time and again to his favourite theme of man in search of his father and his home.

His mature work is all autobiographical, although he tries to give universality to the later and larger part of it by an attempt to make his own experience symbolize the life and thought of America. His method is described by himself as a "torrential recollectiveness". He felt that there was an intense significance in human experience, and was an insatiable seeker after all kinds of sensations. His work is presented with vivid detail, heightened and distorted by an emotionally coloured outlook. This weakens his characterization, while his uncontrollable flow of words tends to swamp action and even feeling. But his chief gift is in words, in his power of vivid description of the sights and incidents that most impressed him in the landscape of his country and the lives of his fellow men. His interest is in the individual and his emotions, which are always interpreted through his own personality. His earliest novel, *Look Homeward, Angel*, the trilogy *Of Time and the River*, *The Web and the Rock*, and *You Can't Go Home Again*, and his *Story of a Novel*, in which he describes his literary methods, are all self-revelatory documents of great psychological interest. His best two novels were published posthumously, and *You Can't Go Home Again* shows that the intense energy of his methods had, at least temporarily, exhausted him. He died in 1938.

"*William Saroyan*"

Mr. Muir Holburn

William Saroyan, American born but of Armenian parentage, is one of the most prolific and distinctive of modern American short story writers. Although his technique has been considerably influenced by those of his greater elders and contemporaries, his approach to his material is quite unique. Though it is of America that he speaks, his vision of life seems to be tempered by the outlook of his race. His usual tone of serene dispassionate sadness, his craving for the earth and the fruit it bears, his eagerness to perceive some element of nobility in all that breathes, his whimsical humour and his Pantheistic fatalism are all a part of his cultural heritage.

Saroyan's belief that art is a form of magic has given much of his work a charming freshness and spontaneity, but it is also responsible for many hasty and indifferent pieces that are no more than casual "diary jottings". His best work has been done in his studies of childhood and adolescence. Stories like "Laughter", "The Earth Day Night Self", and "Seventeen" not only show a detailed knowledge of the thought processes of youth and an ability to render them with beauty and precision, but they represent as well an interesting contribution to the technique of the short story. He excels also in the portrayal of his naive and fantastic Armenian relatives. Odd and lovable as these people are, Saroyan is firm against any temptation to caricature or to sentimentalise over them.

As yet Saroyan is a minor writer but his work shows abundant promise. His play *The Time of Your Life*, which gained for him the Pulitzer Prize for 1939, gives us much cause for hope. In it may be found all his literary assets: moving and spirited prose, fine reproductions of colloquial speech, terse and relevant dialogue, clear-cut characterisation and a salty humour. On the whole, however, the play is riddled with Saroyan's typical faults.

At present Saroyan seems to be in a groove from which it is hardly likely that he will emerge until he is prepared to submit to a certain amount of formal discipline.

Divertisements

October 28

"*Let's Go to the Dogs*"

Mr. W. Lennard, M.A.

This canine cavalcade rambled along from "O Spot, you naughty dog!" (with the traditional race-hatred of cats) and "Let dogs delight to bark and bite" to "Old Dog Tray" (sung to a pathetic tune), Longfellow's "faithful hound", and a dissertation in semi-Gibbon-Johnson language as read by little folk of eight in the "'nineties". A shudder at the bloodhounds in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was corrected by the joyful yelping of the hunting of dogs of Scott; of John Peel's "Ruby, Bellman, and True". The perfectly-bred pack of Theseus from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* swept past, and in their wake came old Sir Roger de Coverley and his beagles and the uninjured hare. Launce's dog (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*) seems to have had something in common with the dog that disturbed the marital peace (occasional) of the Pepys *ménage*. Henry VI's fat spaniel waddled across the stage followed by Goldsmith's

> Mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
> And curs of low degree.

In Australia the doggy English farmer became the equally doggy bushman. The indispensable sheep and cattle dogs occur freely in our literature. Tommy, the retriever pup of "The Loaded Dog", Alligator in "The Drover's Wife", and "That There Dog o' Mine" are the three

of Lawson's. Ogilvie also sings of the bush trinity—man, horse, dog—in many of his verses. Finally, "The Presbytery Dog" of John O'Brien showed his bad manners at church and his shrewd taste at dinner-time.

"*Melodrama in Dickens*"

Mr. C. J. H. O'Brien, B.A.

MELODRAMA is defined by André Maurois as "a drama in which the events, instead of seeming to be imposed by divine fate or by psychological necessity, appear too obviously to be created by the author to astound a spectator or to play upon his feelings". In this sense it is abundant in Dickens's work.

Two significant examples occur in the final scene of *A Tale of Two Cities* and in the chapter of *Nicholas Nickleby*, which describes how Nicholas saves Madeline from her impending marriage to Gride. Both make a powerful appeal to the feelings. But we soon see that the emotions aroused do not spring naturally from character or situation. What Dickens is really doing is to stir our sympathies by satisfying a conventional moral code, in the first scene by assuring us that the goodness of Carton and the seamstress is not neglected in heaven, in the second by saving the good characters from the misfortune and frustrating the plans of the scoundrels.

This brings us to an important reason why melodrama played so large a part in Dickens: he expressed and completely identified himself with the philosophy of life current in Victorian England. The majority of his contemporaries judged men and women in accordance with the accepted moral code: punishment, it was agreed, invariably overtook the wicked, while the good received at least an ultimate reward. Most of Dickens's characters conform to conventional patterns. They are either conspicuously good or conspicuously bad; and their fate is decided according to accepted notions.

The strong appeal Dickens makes to the emotions through the scenes in which these characters participate often contains the possibility of tragedy. But he nearly always falls short of it. The truly tragic writer understands that good and evil are so intermingled in human nature that in a man or woman who is capable of good or great achievements there may exist forces which can lead to disaster. Indeed, the essence of genuine tragedy lies in the circumstance that disaster befalls characters of this type. Owing to his acceptance of the Victorian moral code, Dickens was unable to produce genuine tragedy. By exempting the good from catastrophe, he averted tragedy. By ruining only the unrighteous he destroyed it, for we feel that their end is deserved. Consequently the strong emotional effects which mark the scenes cited, and many others as well, lack justification. They exist purely for the sake of their intrinsic excitement; and this is the essence of melodrama.

But there was an equally important factor behind the melodrama in Dickens. This was an innate dramatic quality in his nature, accen-

tuated by his lifelong connection with the stage. To this can be traced his fondness for violent effects, quite independent of the natural development of plot or character.

This is evident in the construction of his novels. Frequently, for instance, the story is based upon an unlikely incident or a caprice which will astonish or impress. There are also certain features of arrangement, the aim of which is to stir the feelings of the reader in some way: these include the practice of ending a chapter on a note of foreboding and the use of contrast in the placing of characters and incidents. Finally there are recurrent devices of style, such as exclamation, question, and repetition, especially at moments of crisis. All these features contribute greatly to the melodramatic element in Dickens's work.

"*Verse Vices*"

Mr. R. G. Howarth, B.A., B.Litt.

SOME difficulty was experienced in reducing this bubble to a flirt of froth. Any iridescence it may have shown has, naturally, gone out of it.

Following on *The Stuffed Mopoke*, a selection from unpublished catastrophes, a prosegay of printed work was offered as illustrating various "verse vices". Some of this was published in England, by Judas Iscariot Pty., accepting anyone's thirty pieces. Here no publisher would risk his reputation on such, and it usually appears at the vain author's expenese. Examples of the verse given were:

> I see . . .
> A vision of a voice divine,

and

> Still there lingers a sacredness
> From Priory to Church.
> For 'neath her chancel lieth
> Corpses of noble birth.

Even established poets are sometimes guilty of conceit. A seriously intended "Thought on Beauty" by ——, begins:

> Poor butterfly, or what was butterfly, ah me!
> In debris there beneath the tree
> You're dead. . . .
> You're dead, very, O very dead,
> Your abdomen's a corridor for ants. . . .

We are seeing an increase in patriotic verse. As poetry, hardly one of these poundings is worth a rap.

Vanity, all is vanity!

"*Folk-Songs of English Origin*"

November 25: Miss Joan Mackaness, B.A.

A FOLK-SONG is a song of the people, a song based on a legendary or historical event, or some incident of common life, the words and music of which have originated among the common people and are extensively used by them. There are a number of theories regarding the actual method of composition of folk-song, but the most probable

one is that "First of all one man sings a song, and then others sing it after him, changing what they do not like." The folk-song must have had a beginning in the work of an individual, but the method of oral transmission is not merely one by which the folk-song lives; it is a process by which it grows and by which it is created.

Folk-songs fall into two main classes, ballads and songs, although the song class has many subdivisions. Broadly speaking, the ballad is a narrative song, romantic in character, and above all impersonal. The song is a record of a personal experience, frequently of an amatory nature.

Anglo-Saxon folk-tunes are remarkable not only for their charm of colour, their striking melodiousness and their compelling rhythm, but even more on account of aesthetic qualities which only the musician can appreciate. To sum up the qualities of the English folk-song in as succinct a manner as possible, here is a quotation from an American collector: "The folk music of the English speaking peoples has a wider range of emotional expression, more subtle gradations of mood; it may have tragedy without melodrama, tenderness without sentimentality, sadness without bathos, gaiety without frivolity, unrestrained high spirits without banality and rakish humour without vulgarity."

Wherever the English, Irish and Scotch settled in the New World they took their songs with them, and so until the present day they can be heard and collected not only in Great Britain but also in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and the south-eastern states of America, especially in the fastnesses of the Appalachian Mountains.

[Miss Mackaness pleasingly illustrated by singing a number of folk-songs, accompanied by Miss Helen Carolan.]

T. G. Herring.

NOTES

Australian Nursery Rhymes.—Readers of Mrs. Eleanor Dark's novels may be unaware that the verses quoted in *Waterway* are from a book of *Australian Nursery Rimes* collected by Arthur Adams twenty or more years ago. "Many of these rimes", he wrote, "were in actual use in the homes of the authors. Evidently the Australian child had felt the need for Nursery Rimes that fitted its environment more familiarly than the traditional English Nursery Rimes; and his father or mother had to satisfy that natural instinct by putting Australian animals and birds, Australian conditions out-back and in the cities, into home-made Australian Rimes."

Pound.—In *Books of the Month* for April, John Hadfield refers to "the appearance of Ezra Pound as America's Haw Haw". "Before the war began", he states, "Pound made no secret of his admiration for Fascism. Now . . . he has been groomed for stardom on the Rome radio."

September "Southerly".—Our warm thanks to the Fellowship of Australian Writers and Mr. F. W. Ryland for a gracious oral review of this number at a recent meeting. Mr. Ryland has kindly supplied us with a few notes of this review, which will be reproduced in the next number.

"Hermes".—Publication of *Hermes*, the magazine of the undergraduates at the University of Sydney, has been suspended. In the year of the nadir of student journalism, such a failure of literary activity is not surprising. It is none the less regrettable. *Hermes* has a long and varied history, numbering among its contributors men now famous in our literature. May publication soon be resumed!

Short Stories.—A collection of short stories by Margaret Trist, a contributor to *Southerly*, is shortly to be published. It will be called *In the Sun.* Orders for copies, at 3s. 6d. each, will be taken on behalf of the author by the Editor of *Southerly.*

Sir Mungo MacCallum's Addresses to the Association.—The titles and dates of these published addresses are: "W. P. Ker: A Great English Scholar", 1923; "Browning After a Generation", 1924; "The Literary Study of Literature", 1929; "Scott's Equipment in Attainments and Character for his Literary Work", 1932; and "*Hamlet*: Two Popular Lectures", 1930.

"Modern Australian Poetry".—An anthology under this title, prepared by Mr. H. M. Green, is to be published early next year by the Limited Editions Society. It will be decorated by various artists. The subscription to the Society, entitling to this book, is £1 1s.

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